

COMMANDING OFFICER, MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 31 SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY



The Marine Corps' goal is to eliminate sexual assaults within the Corps and to assist those Marines and sailors assigned to Marine Corps units affected by sexual assault. It is defined as intentional sexual contact characterized by the use of force, physical threat, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sex, indecent assault (unwanted or inappropriate sexual contact), or attempts to commit these acts. It can occur regardless of gender, spousal relationship, or age of the victim. **Sexual assault is an assault upon our Marine family and will not be tolerated.**

Sexual assault is a major problem in our Corps. The crux of the problem revolves around consent. Bottom line – **if you engage in sex with someone, they must consent, AND they must have the ability to consent.** Make no mistake – someone who is excessively intoxicated or unconscious cannot consent.

Sexual assault diminishes the reputation and prestige of the Marine Corps. It destroys trust and erodes unit cohesion. Sexual assault violates our core values, and causes both short-term and long-term trauma for victims. All Marines and Sailors who become aware of a sexual assault are required to report the incident to PMO or their chain of command. Failure to report sexual assault incidents may further damage victims and the reputation of our Corps.

Reporting a sexual assault incident can follow one of two paths:

- A **restricted report** allows a victim to receive medical, informational, advocacy, and emotional/psychological counseling support services without notification of law enforcement or the command. A restricted report can be made to a Uniformed Victim Advocate (UVA), Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Healthcare Provider (HCP), Chaplain, or *Military OneSource* 24/7 (800-342-9647 stateside, or 484-530-5908 overseas collect). In a restricted report, the victim's identity remains confidential, and it is not forwarded to law enforcement or command authorities.
- An **unrestricted report** also allows a victim to receive medical, informational, advocacy, and emotional/psychological counseling support services, and it *causes an official investigation to ensue*. An unrestricted report can be made to law enforcement authorities or one's command, as well as to a UVA, SARC, HCP, Chaplain, or *Military OneSource*. Although the victim's identity will not remain confidential, care will be given to ensure that it is released only to those who have a need to know (i.e. unit commander and investigating authorities).

Victims of sexual assault will be treated with dignity and sensitivity, and they have the following rights:

- The right to be treated with fairness and respect for privacy
- The right to be reasonably protected from the accused offender
- The right to be notified of court proceedings
- The right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense
- The right to confer with the attorney for the government in the case
- The right to available restitution
- The right to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender

There are great resources out there to help us prevent, and deal with sexual assault. A few websites you may find helpful are:

- <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/sapro/policy.cfm?sid=ml&smid=4>
- <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/leadersguide/Harassment/SA/generalinfo.cfm>

Bottom line is I view any assault on Marines, Sailors, Civilian Marines, or their family members as an assault on my immediate family. Don't do it – and don't place yourself in a situation where it can occur (being drunk). If it has happened, please turn to us, your Marine Corps family, for both healing and justice.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Cedarholm".

MICHAEL S. CEDERHOLM
Colonel, United States Marine Corps